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ABSTRACT

During 1977-78 Pierce College undertook a study to (1) examine major reasons for attrition; (2) determine reasons for student attendance at Pierce; (3) determine the long-range effects of academic residence at Pierce for its students; and (4) experimentally determine the effects on retention of special treatment, through a "caring ombudsman." Each student in the study sample, representing approximately 1.9% of the total student population, was considered as belonging to one of six "productivity" subsets: admitted but never enrolled; enrolled but never attended classes; withdrew from school before census week; dropped all classes after census week; finished the semester with some passed classes; and finished with all passed classes. Of the total number of students admitted in fall 1977, 48% did not acquire any college units that semester. Significantly more vocational students (62%) completed some class units than non-vocational students (45%). Other variables considered were age, sex, and time of class meetings. The "caring ombudsman" treatment received by half of the sample, seemed to have no effect on the majority; dropout and persistence patterns were approximately the same for both groups. Reasons for not enrolling after admission, were "accepted to another college" and "job"; "poor instructor-student relationship" was a major reason for dropping classes; reasons students gave for intra-semester withdrawal included "transfer" and "met objectives." (MB)

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PIERCE COLLEGE LONGITUDINAL STUDY

FIRST YEAR REPORT

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JC 780 561

FINAL REPORT OF THE FIRST YEAR

PIERCE COLLEGE LONGITUDINAL STUDY (PCLS)

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Introduction

During the academic year 1977-1978, Pierce College began a proposed three-year longitudinal study. The stated purposes were to:

1. Make an in-depth examination of the major reasons for attrition from classes and from college.

2. Determine the real reasons for students attending our college and their self-perceptions in terms of their education and training.

3. Determine on a long-range basis the effects of Pierce College on the lives of the students we seek to serve.

4. Experimentally determine the effects of "special treatment" on retention.

Funding was provided by the Los Angeles Community College District to employ a half-time project administrator and student assistants.

(The research directors of other colleges and the institutional research organizations of California encouraged the Pierce College staff to use this project as a pilot study for possible statewide implementation in the future. Under the auspices of SCCCIRA, NOR CAL, and the R & D Commission of CCJCA, a proposal was written for VEA funds under Subpart 3 to conduct a similar study on a statewide basis. This study has been funded for $125,491 and is in the data collection phase.)

PROCEDURES

The overall design of this study was to select a representative sample of all students admitted to Pierce College in the fall, 1977, and to interview each who either left college or dropped courses to determine their reasons for withdrawing. Further, a random half of the sample was to be given a special treatment similar to that of a caring ombudsman to determine if this would decrease attrition. Explicit procedures for sampling, interviewing, and data collection are described below.

Sampling Procedures

Using the last two digits of the student identification number an attempt was made to select a 2% sample of all students admitted to Pierce College, new, re-entering, and continuing. The digits used were determined randomly, following assurance by by Social Security Department that the last two digits of the social security number (used as student I.D.) has no systematic bias.

These two pairs of digits yielded 579 subjects from a total population of 30,665. This represents 1.8882% of the population rather than 2%. The discrepency of slightly more than .1% occurred because some students do not have or refuse to give their social security number. In such instances the college assigns an identification number. For the Fall, 1977 semester, all such assigned numbers ended in 77.

A subsample of those students with active units at Census Week was compared with the total population using age, sex ratio, and other descriptive variables. The sample contained less than a 1% standard error. This comparison is given in Table 1.

TABLE 1: COMPARISONS OF THE SAMPLE AND POPULATION

	N	DAY	EVENING	MALE	FEMALE	NEW	CONT	<21	>21
SAMPLE AT CENSUS	393	67%	33%	49.4%	50.6%	39%	61%	40.7	59.3
POPULATION	22,645	64%	36%	48.4%	51.6%	37.5%	62.5%	40.2	59.8

Interview Procedures

Four types of telephone interviews were conducted with the selected sample of students.

1. All students who had zero active units at Census Week were asked the reason for their non-attendance or withdrawal from school. These interviews began October 6, 1977.

2. All students who dropped part of their course load or withdrew from college after Census Week were asked the reason for their dropping or withdrawing.

3. All students who had passed more than one college unit at Pierce but were not enrolled in spring, 1978, semester were asked the reason they had left. These interviews began March, 1978.

4. A random half of the sample was identified as the experimental group. These were the subjects given the caring ombudsman treatment. Project personnel labeled the treatment "super-nice." Each was sent a letter offering the service of the Research Office to help with any troubles they had on campus and alerting them for a phone call. Subsequent to the letter, each was called and personally invited to use the Research Office for any assistance they needed in solving their campus difficulties. It was frequently the case that a "super-nice" call included both treatment and inquiry about dropped courses. These interviews were made continuously through October and November, 1977.

Data Collection Procedures

There were two sources of data for the longitudinal study; data from student records and data from interviewing. Three computer programs were written to provide the data from student records. The first program selected the random sample of students on the basis of the last two digits of the identification number. The report of this program listed the students selected alphabetically and reported their address and telephone numbers.

The second program gave a great deal of relevant, descriptive information about each subject selected. This included college history, present study list, etc. A facsimile of the report received for each student is appended.

The third program, run every two weeks, compared each student's previous fall semester study list record with their present record and reported any change. The comparisons were made on the basis of study lists, number of active hours or units, and a number of descriptive variables; e.g., name, address, or telephone number.

The interview data were recorded on a specially prepared form. All required information from the interview was coded and scripted for card punching. Most of the interviews were conducted by specially trained student assistants. Their work was supplemented with interviews by the project administrator and project director.

Several students could not be contacted because of wrong telephone numbers, wrong addresses, no telephone, continuous busy signals, continuous no answers, and a few uncooperative subjects. All efforts were made to contact each student by attempting to get telephone numbers from information, writing cards and letters, and asking instructors to give messages. Because of this persistence, the project personnel were successful in 82% of the attempted contacts.

RESULTS

The results will be presented in four sections. First, data will be given that deal with productivity; i.e., the ratio of courses enrolled

in to courses passed. Second, comparisons will be made between age groups. Third, the effects of the special "super-nice" treatment will be discussed. The final section will include the reasons that students gave for not enrolling, for dropping courses or for dropping out of school, and for not returning to Pierce College in the spring semester.

Productivity

Each student in the sample was considered as belonging to one of six subsets in terms of their class enrollments and grades. This variable is referred to as "Productivity." The subsets were:

1. Admitted but never enrolled.
2. Admitted and enrolled but never attended classes.
3. Admitted, enrolled, and attended classes but withdrew from school before Census Week.
4. Dropped all classes after Census Week.
5. Finished the semester with some productive classes.*
6. Finished the semester with all productive classes.

The distinction between Group 3 and Group 4 is made on the basis of the date that the last class was dropped. Since it became apparent during the study that there are often substantial administrative delays in the up-dating of computerized student records, any conclusions drawn which are based on a precise Census Week cutoff must be viewed with caution because of unavoidable inaccuracies in the data. Each student was further classified as vocational or non-vocational by stated major.**

Table 2 gives the number and percent of the sample in each of the productive categories. Note that 32% of the sample was no longer in attendance at Census Week. Further, an additional 16% (24% of those counted for census) finished the semester with no productive classes. Overall, of the total number of students who were admitted in the fall semester, 1977 (new, continuing, and re-entering), 48% did not acquire any college units in that semester.

*A productive class is one in which the student has achieved a grade of A, B, C, D, or Pass. Non-productive classes include any other grade or status; i.e., W, I, F, Dropped, or Excluded.

**For this study vocational students were identified by the major declared when they applied for admission. This procedure yields fairly unreliable data. Determination of vocational students is better made using criteria developed by the Student Accountability Model (SAM). This method was not cost-effective for the current study.

TABLE 2: PRODUCTIVITY OF THE SAMPLE

GROUP	VOC #	VOC %	NON-VOC #	NON-VOC %	TOTAL #	TOTAL %	CUM %
(1) Never enrolled	40	17	68	20	108	19	19
(2) Never attended class	3	1	11	3	14	2	21
(3) Dropped Out Before Census	16	7	47	14	63	11	32
(4) Dropped Out After Census	31	13	63	19	94	16	48
(5) Dropped Some Classes	93	39	80	24	173	30	78
(6) Passed All Classes	56	23	70	21	126	22	100
TOTAL	239	100	339	100	578	100	

Vocational students were found to be significantly better at achieving productive units than the non-vocational. Sixty-two percent of the vocational students had some productive courses, whereas only 45% of the non-vocational students fell in that category. A 2 x 2 Chi Square was computed between vocational and non-vocational students and those who finished with zero productive classes (Groups 1 through 4) and those with productive classes (Groups 5 and 6). The Chi Square was 18.38. With one degree of freedom, this is significant much beyond the .05 level of confidence.

Table 3 presents the same data, for students in groups 4, 5, and 6 only, i.e., all who had active units at census week. There were 393 or 68% of the initial sample remaining. Group 4, those who had active units at census week but finished with no productive courses, represent 94 students or 24% of the total sample. Again the vocational students looked better than the non-vocational. Only 17% of those with active units at census week had no productive classes while for the non-vocational, the same group represented 30%. A 2 x 3 Chi Square was computed between vocational and non-vocational students and Groups 4, 5 and 6. The Chi Square of 10.73 with two degrees of freedom is again far beyond that required for significance at the .05 level of confidence.

TABLE 3: PRODUCTIVITY OF THOSE COUNTED AT CENSUS

	VOC #	VOC %	NON-VOC #	NON-VOC %	TOTAL #	TOTAL %
4 No productive classes	31	17	63	30	94	24
5 Some productive classes	93	52	80	37	173	44
6 All productive classes	56	31	70	33	126	32

Non-productive classes were examined a second way. Although no tabular information is presented, 47% of all the enrollments, i.e., all the classes enrolled in by the sample of students, resulted in a drop, exclusion, W, I, of F. These data will be referred to again in a discussion of the reasons students gave for withdrawing from school or dropping classes.

The data in Table 4 are used to establish a relationship between productivity in classes and in the time (e.g. Day, Evening) classes met. Table 4 gives the time of day students attended classes, reported separately for those with productive classes (Groups 5 and 6) and those who finished without productive classes (Groups 1, 2, 3, and 4). The number of students with no enrollments (Group 1) is given, but not included in the percentages. These data are further broken down by vocational and non-vocational students.

TABLE 4

PRODUCTIVITY AS A FUNCTION OF TIME CLASSES MET

PRODUCTIVE

	VOC		NON-VOC		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%
NO CLASSES						
DAY	77	52	74	49	151	51
EVENING	48	32	40	27	88	29
BOTH	24	16	36	24	60	20
TOTAL	149	100	150	100	299	100

NON-PRODUCTIVE

	VOC		NON-VOC		TOTAL		TT	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NO CLASSES	(42)		(72)		(114)		(114)	
DAY	20	42	47	40	67	41	218	47
EVENING	19	40	54	46	73	44	161	35
BOTH	9	18	16	14	25	15	85	18
TOTAL	90	100	189	100	279	100	578	100

These figures indicate that for both vocational and non-vocational students, the highest proportion of productive students attend in the day time. (Voc, 52% vs 32%; Non-Voc, 49% vs. 27%; Overall, 51% vs. 29%). Among the non-productive students, the percentages are closer (Voc, 42% vs. 40%; Non-Voc, 40% vs. 46%; Overall 41% vs. 44%). Said another way, a smaller proportion of students who are productive take courses in the evening (29%) than non-productive students(44%). More students who are unproductive are enrolled in night classes only.

Comparison of Age Groups

In order to make judgments about the relationship of the age of students to other aspects of the data collected, the sample was divided into three age groups. Group 1 includes those under 20, representing 30% of the sample, Group 2 those between 20 and 29, representing 40% of the sample, and Group 3 those 30 and older, represented 30% of the sample. Tables 5 through 7 show a comparison of these age groups in terms of sex, time of day attending classes, and productivity.

Table 5 gives the distribution of sex by age group. Overall there is an almost equal split. However, women represent only 44% of the youngest group and 64% of those over 30. The indications are that we are not getting our share of the women from the high schools, but that the supplement of older women returning accounts for the even sex distribution. (An interesting follow-on study would be to determine what proportion of the "older women" belong to the displaced homemaker group.)

TABLE 5: SEX RATIO FOR AGE GROUPS

	16-19		20-29		≥30		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
MALE	96	56	133	57	62	36	291	50
FEMALE	75	44	101	43	111	64	287	50
TOTAL	171	100	234	100	173	100	578	100

Table 6 gives the data on the time of day the classes are taken by the age groups. These data validate that which everyone suspected, i.e., the younger students are more likely to take all classes during the day.

TABLE 6: TIME OF DAY BY AGE GROUP

	16-19		20-29		≥30		TOTAL	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
NO CLASSES	32	19	56	24	26	15	114	20
DAY	90	53	69	30	59	34	218	38
EVENING	18	11	64	27	79	46	161	28
BOTH	31	18	45	19	9	5	85	15
TOTAL	171		234		173			

Table 7 shows the productivity by age group. These data are worth considering carefully. Though there are no outstanding differences for those categories having no productive classes (1-4); those students in their twenties appear to be the least productive.

TABLE 7: AGE GROUP BY PRODUCTIVITY

	16-19		20-29		≥30		TOTAL	
GROUP	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1	27	16	55	24	26	15	108	19
2	5	3	8	3	1	.6	14	2
3	21	12	25	11	17	10	63	11
4	20	12	44	19	30	17	94	16
5	78	46	65	28	30	17	173	30
6	20	12	37	16	69	40	126	22

There are, however, dramatic differences comparing the youngest and oldest groups in catagory 5, i.e., dropping some portion of their classes. Forty-six percent of the youngest group dropped at least one course, compared with only 17% of those over 30. Only 12% of the younger group completed all their courses while 40% of the older group fell in that category. There are many explanations for these results. First, older students tend to take fewer classes, frequently only one or two; younger students take on heavier, perhaps more difficult course loads. Second, the younger students who were taking many courses frequently "switched," i.e., dropped a course that met at one time and added the same course meeting at another time. One could speculate that our younger students are not given appropriate guidance in terms of how large a load they can carry or that they are less responsible and less realistic in assessing their capability than the older students. Regardless, these data verify some things suspected about the behavior of age groups in our college.

Special Treatment

To test the effectiveness of the special "super-nice" treatment, comparisons were made between the experimental and control groups in terms of proportion continuing in spring 1978, and proportion finishing some productive units. Only 51% of the experimental group finished with productive classes while 52% of the control group were in this category. Of the experimental group, 70% enrolled in spring 1978, while 76% of the control group had reenrolled. Neither criterion reflects a success of the treatment. In both instances, the control group performed slightly, though not significantly better, than the special treatment group.

There are many speculative reasons for the lack of treatment effect. When one considers the multitude of events and circumstances that affect the decisions of students to drop courses or leave school, it is not surprising that a single letter and phone call failed to significantly contribute to the result. Despite the lack of significant treatment effect, there are two anecdotal results to report, results that perhaps suggest further avenues of investigation.

1. The project staff making the "super-nice" phone calls reported that all the students were pleased to be contacted and that someone knew their name and cared about them.

2. In the three weeks succeeding the mailing of the "super-nice" letters, eight students dropped in or made appointments to chat with the project director. In each instance, they were interviewed and an appointment made for them to see the appropriate counselor, teacher, or campus agency.

These essentially clinical findings suggest that a counseling program that provides a more personal contact service than existing programs might increase productivity, especially among the younger, less mature members of the student body.

Reasons for Non-Attendance

This section of the results will deal with the reasons that students:

A. Were admitted but never enrolled.

B. Dropped some or all of their courses, and

C. Failed to return to college in the spring semester

A. Were admitted but never enrolled

Table 8 shows the reasons for not being in school given by Groups 1, 2, and 3. Note that the major reasons for Group 1, those who never enrolled, were "Accepted to Another College" (24%), "Job" (26%), and "Classes Closed" (20%). The implications of these are:

1. Many students use Pierce College (and perhaps other community colleges) as insurance policies. Most of the Group 1's from Pierce College who gave this reason had applied to CSUN or UCLA and use Pierce as a back up. Some also obtain admission to other community colleges; (e.g., Valley, Mission, City).

2. It was determined that the category "Job" really represented a number of different aspects of employment and school conflict. Some were shortage of money; e.g., "I decided to get a job instead." Others were schedule conflicts.

3. Those who did not enroll because the classes they wanted were closed were eager to have another try and frequently asked how they could improve their enrollment priority. It was particularly discouraging to the project staff to see the relatively large number of students lost because of closed classes and, at the same time, the large number of students who dropped out of the classes that were requested by others. Stated another way, those students who enrolled in highly sought after classes and drop, do the college a double disservice. First, they deny the college the privilege of helping them learn, and second, deny a place to other students who potentially would remain.

Group 2, the "no-shows", have similar reasons to Group 1; i.e., accepted another college and job. The third important reason for this group was "no time."

B. Dropped Some or All Classes

One of the major reasons for dropping all classes early in the semester (Group 3) dealt with the instructor-student relationship, ("poor instructional procedures" and "did not like instructor"). For all categories of withdrawal, the reason "job" is heavily used.

Although Group 1 was recorded as having used "closed classes" the most, this finding does not stand by itself; it sets up an insidious "domino effect,"

TABLE 8: REASONS FOR DROPPING SCHOOL FOR GROUPS 1-2

GROUP	1	2	3	
N	74	20	30	
	7			a. Transportation
	3			b. No parking place
	24	40	7	c. Accepted in another college.
	20	5	3	d. All the classes I wanted were closed.
	26	25	23	e. Job
				f. Money problems
%	3	10	13	g. Personal reasons
	5	5	3	h. Illness
			3	i. Illness in family
			3	j. Psychological discomfort
			10	k. Were not the courses I wanted
			13	l. Content of the class was not what I wanted
	3		7	m. Late to register or for classes for reasons other than illness.
			17	n. Did not like instructor
			23	o. Poor instructional procedures
			10	p. Poor or inadequate materials or equipment
	4			q. Program not available
				r. Grade problems
			10	s. Too difficult
	8	25	10	t. No time
	8	5	7	u. Moved
	9	5	3	v. Indefinite motive

Non-deliverable = 33 or 21%

for some of the most important reasons for dropping classes were "not the class I wanted" and "content of class not what I wanted." In many cases, when respondents were asked why they had enrolled, they replied that the classes they initially had sought were closed. Thus, the classes they dropped were second choices for them. The fact of their enrolling in and dropping out of these second-choice classes produced double jeopardy for the college since their temporary enrollment in these classes may have kept other students out of these classes.

During the course of interviewing students who had dropped classes, the list of potential reasons expanded from the original 10 to 36. However, with few exceptions no one seemed the raison d'etre for the high attrition.

Table 9 shows 15 generic reasons for students having dropped classes or left school. The original reasons were combined in logical fashion; e.g., all reasons dealing with "job", and "short of money", were lumped together. This table separates the reasons given by the productive students (only Group 5 since Group 6 passed all of their courses) and non-productive students (Groups 1 through 4). Each is further broken down into vocational and non-vocational. Over all, 32% of those who had dropped courses gave the reasons related to "job" or "money." It is interesting to note that, within the productive student category, the number of reasons given by vocational and non-vocational students appears about equal. In the non-productive category, however, a far greater number of "job or money" responses were given by non-vocational students than by vocational students.

The next most important reasons were "instructor problems," "under-prepared," "class switching, and "no time." With respect to the last, the findings are very interesting, if difficult to interpret. Many more class switching responses were given by the productive students than the non-productive students. Thirty-four "class-switching" responses were given by productive students, compared with only two such responses for non-producers. Whereas administrators might regard this kind of student behavior as highly inconvenient, it almost looks as if "class switching" is a productive student behavior or at the very least correlates to some useful extent with productivity. A reasonable and testable hypothesis is that productive students understand their own needs better than non-productive students and are thus able to switch out of classes in which they cannot succeed.

C. Failed to Return to College in Spring Semester

After the beginning of the spring, 1978 semester, all students were grouped into one of three categories:

1. Any member of the sample who was enrolled in spring, 1978, was considered in the category "Student."

2. Any member of the sample who had zero college credits and was not enrolled in spring, 1978, was considered in the category "Non-Student."

3. Any member of the sample who had passed more than one college unit and was not enrolled in spring, 1978, was considered a "Former Student."

All of the former students were called to determine why they had not returned. Table 10 shows the gratifying findings that most of the reasons were positive; i.e., reflected a completion of objectives. Thirty-six percent transferred, most to four-year colleges; 35% had job related reasons, many having learned job skills here; 16% stated simply that they had accomplished what they wished to at Pierce and were pleased with the college.

Indefinite Motivation

One of the reasons listed in each table is called "Indefinate Motivation." This category is difficult to describe operationally, though, clinically, it appears easy to identify. Early in the telephone interviewing, the projected staff noted that some respondents tended to hedge in their response, partially as if they chose not to share, and partially as if there were no satisfactory answer they could make. A typical "Indefinite Motivation" response was "I forgot my counseling appointment so I decided to wait until next semester." The other cues tended to be in the types of sentence structure used by the respondents and the tone of voice in which they were delivered. Those identified as possessing "Indefinite Motivation" tended to speak somewhat haltingly, to leave sentences unfinished before starting another (as if they had not thought out completely what they were to say), and when sentences were completed, they appeared to end on an up-note, almost like a question. In contrast, other students were relatively precise in their speech, tended to speak in complete sentences, and ended each sentence on a strong vocal note. The difference is that between ending a piece of music with a minor chord (Indefinite Motivation) or with a full major chord. Though, as earlier stated, operational definition is difficult, the common description and discrimination by interviewers had a high reliability.

Overall, the impression is of a youthful (most students with Indefinite Motivation tended to be among the 16-19 or the low 20's group) and immature person, one not sure of goals and perhaps going to community college because of family pressure or because school attendance is a habit. Those is this group, incidentally, are not to be confused with those who told interviewers that they were attending Pierce in order to explore career or major study availabilities. This group tended to have made a firm decision to explore, and though they did not know what they wanted, they appeared to be comfortable in their search. Indefinitely Motivated students gave interviewers the impression of being lost.

Further research in this area might produce fruitful results in terms of reducing attrition. If a means could be found of identifying such students (which should not be difficult; they are probably as vague in the registration lines as they are on

the telephone), it might be useful to develop a counseling treatment designed to assist them in being more aware of their own interests and skills so they could make better-informed academic choices. Given that the modal age of students at Pierce is 19 years and that most of the indefinitely motivated students appeared to be among recent high school graduates, it is suggested that such a program might have considerable impact on student attrition, especially among the 32% of admitted students who has zero active units by Census Week.

TABLE 10: REASONS FOR NOT RETURNING (N=69)

REASONS	#	%
Transfer	25	36
Occupational	8	12
2-Year	4	6
4-Year	13	19
Job	24	35
Met Objectives	11	16
Graduated	3	4
Pregnant	3	4
Conflict-Other School	3	4
Illness-(Self, Family)	3	4
Jail	1	1
Money Problems	3	4
Indefinite Motivation	10	14
Other	2	3

*Total > % 100 because multiple reasons were recorded.

Overall Study Results

The four goals of the study were:

1. Making an in-depth examination of the major reasons for attrition

2. Determine the reasons for student attendance at Pierce

3. Determine the long-range effects of academic residence at Pierce for its students

4. Experimentally determine the effects of a special "caring ombudsman" treatment on retention.

With respect to the first goal, the results include a comprehensive list of reasons that students gave for either withdrawing from classes or from school. These reasons include both inter-semester and intra-semester withdrawal. As will be noted below, the attainment of this goal has produced suggestions for future research designed to decrease the attrition rate at Pierce both before and after Census Week.

Details on the second goal must be arrived at in a backhanded fashion. A study of the reasons students gave for intra-semester withdrawal included Transfer (36%), Job (35%), and Met Objectives (16%). These data indicate that a high percentage of productive students intend to make use of Pierce as a stepping stone to other institutions (occupational school, 12%, other community college 6%, 4-year college, 19%). It is difficult to interpret the job reason, since the data give no indication whether the respondents obtained a job for which they had been trained at Pierce or whether they obtained a job simply because they needed money and their Pierce training played no part in their placement. This is an area in which future research might be valuable. Met Objectives is another ambiguous finding, though it is obvious that these students saw Pierce as having had a positive effect. This finding is difficult to interpret further, because a high percentage of students listed "Self Interest" as their major. Within this group it is impossible to differentiate between the high school graduate who has not yet made up his mind, the secretary who is increasing her job skills and the housewife who wants to learn more about English Literature or take Vocational Sewing to become a better wife and mother.

Since the Pierce College Longitudinal Study has only run for one year, it is not possible to make any statement with respect to the third goal. From the data above, it would appear that for a substantial percentage of productive students Pierce does an effective job in assisting them to meet their goals. It would take further study of these students to determine the long-range effects, if indeed such effect could be separated out from the effects of

whatever subsequent training they received. One of the major problems of long-range follow-up is the post-treatment intervening variables. Life is full of serendipity and other sorts of surprises.

With respect to the fourth goal, the data indicate that the treatment, at least for the majority of students had no effect. It has been suggested that the intervention was not powerful enough. It was also noted clinically that the "caring ombudsman" treatment was useful for a small percentage of students, and since the offer of a helping hand was useful for these students, perhaps this points the way for future study.

There were several serendipitous results of the study. First, it was relatively inexpensive to obtain a great deal of information over the telephone from a small sample, information that is generalizable to the larger population. This may point the way to reporting to state and federal agencies by sample rather than by total population and result in a considerable dollar saving.

Second, a great deal of information has been obtained about the difference between vocational and non-vocational students in terms of their productivity and possibly in terms of their needs when they are admitted to college. As a group, the vocational students appear to be better motivated and more planful in their behavior. This is heartening for those who must make reports on VEA programs, and it indicates that there is need for research on non-vocational students, since these appear to account for a disproportionate share of attrition figures.

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